



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE OLD COMRADES LINK UP NEWSLETTER #124 OCTOBER 2017



NEW CONTACTS



GARD

Former W/415116 Corporal Eileen Gard (nee McClory). Eileen was in the first intake of WRAC Provost (TA) in Edinburgh c1961. She enjoyed the life and then joined the Regular Service and went on to train at Kensington where she remained for two years where she carried out a number of special duties. She was then posted to Singapore, Aldershot and Bulford and in 1966 was discharged when she married the late Mick Gard.

WILL

Former 23641855 Lance-Corporal Colin Will, Squad 770. Colin completed his National Service between September 1959 and October 1961 and served in SHAPE and in Chester.

WRAGG

Former 23996947 Sergeant Allan Wragg, Squad R48. Allan, who was commonly known as "Harry" during his service, served between August 1964 until December 1986 with the following units: 1 (Br) Corps Provost Company, Hong Kong Provost Company (Kowloon), RMPTC (Signals Training Wing and ITW), 111 Provost Company (Fallingbostenel), 2 RMP in Northern Ireland, 113 Provost Company (Munster), Cyprus District Provost Company (Episkopi) including 12 months with UNFICYP Military Police Company in Nicosia. Then it was a return to RMPTC as IC Signals Training and he concluded his service at ASMT Leconfield (Signals Training).

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

I knew it would not be long before comments about the BBC's drama "*The Last Post*" rolled in. Just to soften the blow I have incorporated some photographs of real military policemen in Aden. Before I

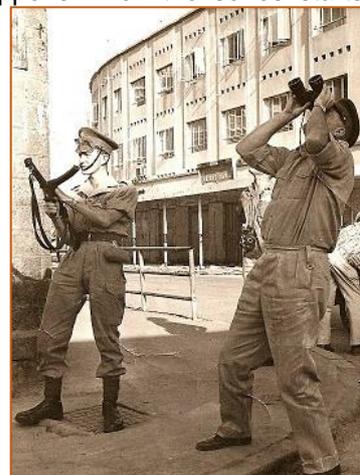


had even sent the last batch of newsletters out Gordon Chick was bouncing down the fibre optics. He said, 'I have just received your last letter, which is always interesting to read. Colin Whatman mentions *The Last Post*. I have seen a clip on BBC1, and it appears as if the RMP are always on duty ie Whites, red top, and arm bands. Not very likely. Also there are two officers walking about getting salutes from every NCO, not once did they return the curtesy, again very unlikely, as I found all officers of whatever regiment always returned a salute It will be interesting to see what happens when the series starts. Why can't these producers

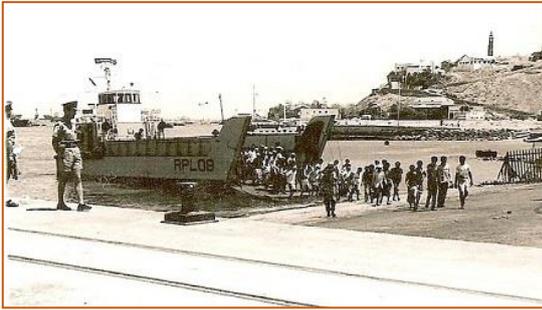
get things right?'

Steve Ketteringham said, 'Have just seen some pictures of the show *The Last Post*, here is my first comment, of which I am sure there will be many. The cap badge does not have ER on it but RMP in the centre. Perhaps to do with not copying exactly our uniform?' Steve later added, 'Well I watched it and what a load of c--p. The Lt looked too old. The OC forgot to wear his rank in one of the scenes and the first salute I saw was a Navy one, the rest of the salutes were extremely bad. It made us look like plonkers. What happens next week will be awaited with anticipation.'

Chas Baily said, 'Just seen *The Last Post*. Wrong cap badge, officers caps, in All Ranks mess never wore webbing, the wife would have disappeared on the next flight and when did an officers wife ever ride in the back of a Landover, not often. That is just for starters.'



Wendy Bromwich commented, 'Thank you for the 'Link Up'. What I am dropping you a note on is the BBC series *The Last Post*. Bob I had to switch it off part way through as I was annoyed at the whole content in particular the uniform and cap covers. The marching, the whole management of the episode, and the wives; we all came out of it, until I switched off, in a bad way. Those of us who were in during that year and that time did not behave as it looked to the viewers. Am I the only person who has complained? Ed: Wendy, now you know you are not the only one to complain.'



doubt you have had hundreds of e-mails after last night's load of rubbish. If the writer of that programme based his story on his father's service with the RMP where was he serving? Cloud Cuckoo Land? The whole thing put the RMP in bad light and I honestly believe before the next episode is shown someone in authority should have this programme pulled from the air I could go on but I will not as I am sure you are fed up of it.'



Bob Hart said, 'Dear Bob, I am not prone to commenting on TV shows but had to write on this one. Having served in Aden in 1963, albeit for only 6 months, I was looking forward to seeing this programme. I have never seen such a load of rubbish. I do not know who advises on the military aspects of these drama series but he was definitely never in the Corps in Aden or the BBC took no notice of his advice. Everything was wrong from the uniforms, way of life and their operational role. The story line was also rubbish. I will not carry on nit-picking as I am sure I will not be the only one commenting on it. I doubt if I shall be watching any further episodes. That photograph taken in Amsterdam brought back a few memories!'

David Hartley said, 'I bet you will have a monster inbox on this one. I did not watch it myself, as I expected it to be tripe. I phoned Bryan Bonsor on Mon morning, on another subject, and he had watched it. The following morning he was still, not just livid but Incandescent. He said he had been shouting so much at the TV, his wife had left the room. Now Bryan is 86, he cannot afford to get so wound up, so I was really glad he could unload on me on Monday. He even said he felt a lot better afterwards. His main complaints were, older people playing young NS lads, red tops wrong, and never taking their Arm Bands off. I did not see the show, so I cannot comment. Perhaps you next letter should be headed....Andrex.....it will probably be about that long to get in all the comments.'

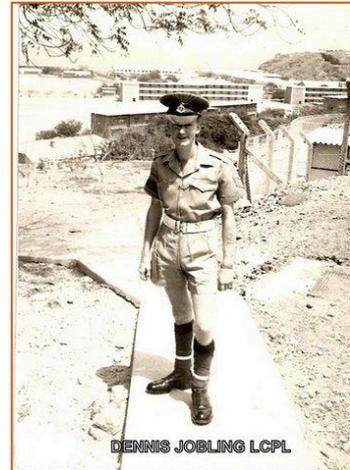


Speaking of Bryan Bonsor he said, 'Dear Bob. The program on BBC on Sunday night "*The Last Post*" should be the last one shown. It was total crap, dress wise, did they go to bed with the red cap cover and arm band on. They had meals with them on. It was total rubbish. I hope someone takes the company that produced it to task.'

I think that is enough said on the subject but I will conclude by letting you share a message which was sent by Colonel Green, Regimental Secretary to a third party. 'Both Colin Watkins and John Bonell served there at about the same time as Captains and their services were offered to the researcher who was really very good - but what seems to have gone awry is that the Production

Company employed a military advisor who new absolutely nothing about the RMP and they ignored my appeals for accuracy and our offer of assistance.

And "no" we didn't operate in such a role - we policed 24 (Inf) Brigade that did undertake the aggressive ops and that Formation is not in evidence here in the drama; conducted mobile security patrols; escorted high-value convoys and VIPs; arrested and processed suspected terrorists and guarded detainees; searched inc., searching Arab women by WRAC (Provost); interdicted the illegal flow of arms through the Port; and engaged some fire fights with insurgents, but certainly did not aggressive counter-insurgency actions on the scale as depicted in the series - for a start there wasn't enough of us there and we had few infantry skills and no heavy weapons or either direct or indirect support weapons! I could only watch for 5 mins - utter tosh - so you may write as and when you wish so to do - I need to compose myself before I launch forth!



In a later message to me Colonel Green added 'Just for the record, the RMP Museum was intimately involved in the early research phase only and then we were asked one subsequent question about the type of whistle the RMP uses. Other than that, we were ignored and despite our appeals to the production team to use our expertise (gratis) and warnings from me that they were getting critical aspects and details of uniform clearly wrong - not least the strange cap badge - they politely and consistently refused all our entreaties and more significantly that of their own researcher too. They stayed loyal to the Military Advisor who clearly knows nothing of RMP!'

I think it is time I played The Last Post for The Last Post

-ooOoo-

Brian Andrews now transports us from KD to the centre of Germany. He said, 'Once again, many thanks for your newsletter. It's always a good read and usually I manage to find at least one familiar name. It occurs to me that I can't remember ever having read anything about the ACD (Autobahn Control Detachment) at Helmstedt. The ACD was a section of 247 consisting of about ten NCOs and a Captain in charge together with a REME recce fitter with a Scammel truck. Shortly after arriving in 247 from training during August 1958, I was sent down 'the Zone' to the ACD. I was only there until January 1959. Whilst there, I met up with Dave Potter - a National Service Corporal - plus one or two others the names of whom I've just forgotten.

One anecdote; Elvis Presley did his conscription with the US Army in Germany. Rumour went around that he was due to 'go up' the Autobahn to Berlin on a specific day and as a result, I think everyone in the detachment volunteered for duty on said date! If he did travel, then he was either incognito or buried under a sheet of tarpaulin on the back of one their trucks. Disappointed, we all got back into the back of the one-tonner and returned to the unit. I must add that the Americans drove convoys through the Zone just to let the 'bad boys' know who was in charge at the end of the day! These excursions were known as 'sweeps'. Correct me if I'm wrong.

For those who are perhaps not too aware of the ACD and purpose, we were there to document all British military personnel travelling to Berlin and to advise the other end at Dreilinden of their names and vehicle registration numbers. All had to be in possession of appropriate travel documents issued by a military authority. We also gave those travelling clear instructions on behaviour if stopped by VOPOS, and, most importantly, even clearer instructions on speed. Vice versa, the guys at Dreilinden did the same. So if there is anyone around who can still remember the Kajuete Bar and sessions with the Yanks, take care and, who knows, maybe we can get together in Helmstedt.'

-ooOoo-

A number of you contacted me regarding the passing of Alan Hayward. Rece Porter was just one of many and he said, 'I was sorry to hear of the passing of Alan Hayward. I served with him in 24 Bde Pro Unit in Aden - 1965-1967. I was able to meet up with him in Florida around 2001. I lived there and he was visiting from his home in Canada.' *Ed: If you wish to send any correspondence to Maureen Hayward and family then the address to use is 116 Victoria Street, Dundas, Ontario, Canada L9H 2C3.*

-ooOoo-

Pete Spooner said, 'As a member of the arena party I can confirm Mike's comment (*se last edition*) about pegs being driven harder into the ground. My recollection is that on one occasion Bill Griffiths upset the arena party and the pegs for the mounted team went in harder than usual, no surprise that the motorcyclists won that show.

-ooOoo-

Roy Oswick appears to have swapped the Cypriot sunshine for more traditional English weather. 'Hi Bob. We have just returned from a week in the Lake District and during an evening with friends I mentioned that I had visited the small town of Cockermouth on a previous occasion with an army friend called Ernie Watson. Ernie and I were serving together in Northern Ireland when an opportunity came up for some of us to attend the Metropolitan Police Driving Academy in Hendon as guest students on the Police Advanced Drivers Course. Ernie and I both applied and were accepted. We had a great time at Hendon, mixing with qualified police drivers and instructors, learning new driving skills, driving some very powerful unmarked police cars, and legally driving at speeds well in excess of permitted limits, not only with the permission of, but with enthusiastic encouragement from our Police Sgt Instructor and all the time treated like celebrities as we were the first RMP candidates to take part in this type of course.

Ernie was from Cockermouth near Workington and at the end of the course we called in for the weekend and stayed with his mother and father. We had a memorable weekend with then and until last week I had never been back to the Lakes area.

Seeing that a former Sgt Ernie Watson had become a new contact causes me to wonder if this could be the very same Ernie Watson that I knew. I have now returned to live in the UK after ten years in the sun living in North Cyprus. We came back in February and have spent much time contacting and meeting up with old friends that we have here but have not seen a lot of in the last 10 years. If you have Ernie's details please send him my very best regards, and feel free to pass on my invitation to him to make contact. If this is not the Ernie Watson that I knew then I am sorry to have wasted your time. With thanks for the great newsletter.' *Ed: Roy had not wasted my time and by now Roy and Ernie are no doubt swinging the lamp over old times.*

ROYAL MILITARY POLICE ASSOCIATION

I have great delight in reporting that the North America Branch Reunion in Banff went well and my prayers were answered in as much as it snowed which added to the scenery for which I will never find sufficient adjectives to describe. Congratulations to the Branch Committee for laying everything on for those attending. It was quite an international selection of attendees who arrived not only from Canada but the USA, England, Scotland, Jersey and one frozen couple from Australian. I am sure that the said Branch will enlarge upon the event in their Journal notes but I would like to include a couple of photographs. On the right we have Harry Vagg (Vancouver) and Barry Gale (Jersey) who had not seen each other for 65 years. They were in Squad 179 and both went on to serve with 227 Provost Company in Trieste. Last I saw of Barry (he is on the left) he was heading out west for some catch-up time with Harry.



Now the next photograph I have waited a long time for, one of Brian Griffiths (Chairman Western Australian Branch) not wearing a short sleeved shirt and telling me how hot it is in Perth.

On the 22nd October members of Depot, Aldershot, Salisbury Plain and West Sussex branches attended a service at the Memorial Chapel, Southwick Park. Presiding over the service was none other than former Warrant Officer David "Geordie" Fawcett who is a Chaplain at Salisbury Cathedral. I knew Geordie in 1 (Br) Corps in the times of the dinosaurs when he was a mean goalkeeper and later he took over from me when I left Bulford in 1983.

-ooOoo—

At Walsall, on the 28th October former members of 1 (Br) Corps Provost Company met up for their annual reunion under the "command" of Theo Dunn who has been organising the event for some seventeen years. At last, after a few false starts, I made it there this year and was delighted to meet up with Ernie Watson and Rob Eatwell who I last saw in 1967 when I left Bielefield for pastures new.

There was a distinct mixture of National Servicemen and Regular military policemen each with a tale to tell and it was most enjoyable to see the lamp being swung. The odd photograph album was produced and of course it was the game of putting a name to a face, or "I remember him". It was eloquently summed-up by Theo who said that regardless of whether you were National Service or Regular there was one binding factor, we were all Military Policemen. So, if you served in 1 (Brush) Corps, as it was affectionately known, then watch this space for next year's date and I will see you there.

NOTICES AND INFORMATION

Please read, digest and act accordingly to the message from the Regimental Secretary concerning contact details for the RHQ.

"The days of a RHQ packed full of staff are sadly long gone and in the age of instant communication by email and with some desks only 'manned' for part of the week, it is important and more effective that those who wish to contact the RHQ, direct their enquiry to the correct addressee/appointment holder all of whom have their own individual email address and telephone number, the details of which are shown below:

Colonel J T Green OBE Regimental Secretary 02392 284206 regsec_rhqrm@btconnect.com

Major M C Thomson Assistant-Regimental Secretary & Benevolence Grants Officer 02392 284206 (Tuesdays & Wednesdays only) cbf_rhqrm@btconnect.com

Richard Callaghan BA(Hons) Curator 02392 284372 museum_rhqrm@btconnect.com

Toby Brayley Assistant-Curator 02392 284372 museum_rhqrm@btconnect.com

Pauline Bailey Shop Manager 02392 284651 (1000-1600 hours Monday-Thursday) (1000 -1400 hours Fridays) shop_rhqrm@btconnect.com

Shereen Weeks Journal Enquiries 02392 284564 (Tuesdays only) rhqrm@btconnect.com

Additionally, for reasons that should be self-evident, the RHQ will not respond to calls for benevolence assistance, welfare support or notification of deaths via social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter etc"

CAN YOU HELP

Derek Harling is also seeking information, he said. 'Going back a few years now 1952 etc, I served with a Pes Launder who was attached to HQ 7th Armoured Division at Verden, Germany. Admittedly it's a long time ago but is it possible after such a time to be able to ascertain this gentleman's whereabouts. There are a group of us who are trying to arrange a reunion we already have 5/6 of us who have kept in touch over the years. We would greatly appreciate any help you could give us' If you have any information then contact Derek at derek@odba.co.uk

Roger Caesley Cdr RN (Retd) sent in the following request, 'I am try to make contact with Ian Spilstead who was serving in the Royal Military Police in the 1970s. He was a member of the Cape Town to Auckland crew of HMSTY Adventure, the Joint Services entry in the 2nd Whitbread Round the World Yacht Race, which took place in 1977/78. As it is now forty years since the race, the crew are holding a reunion and very much hope that we can contact Ian to invite him to attend. If you know of Ian's whereabouts then ask him to contact Roger on 01935 83044 or at roger.caesley@epsilonoptics.com

DEATHS

BRIEN

Former 23492424 Warrant Officer Class 1 Geoff Brien BEM died on the 19th October at the Eberly Care Home in Barnstaple. Geoff Brien was 78 years of age and is survived by his daughter Melanie. Geoff, who was in Squad 604, served from 1957 until 1978 in various theatres around the world.

COX

I received the following information from Jeremy Cox. 'Dear Sir, Please may I request that this death notification be recorded in the "Old Comrades Newsletter". Nicholas Dutton Cox died on the 7th

October 2017. Served 1957 – 1963. 200 Provost Company, Singapore and 101 [Det] Provost Company Rheindahlen. He was also a member of the Cheshire and North Wales R.M.P Association.'

GALLAGHER

Major Jim Gallagher passed away on the 8th October 2017. He served with the City Police in Glasgow before joining the Corps where he spent a full career mainly with the Special Investigation Branch. He was commission in 1980. A full Obituary by the Regimental Secretary will appear in the Corps Journal.

LEWIS

Phil Locke sent the following message. 'With sadness reporting the death of former 23683007 Corporal Ralph Colin Lewis RMP of 13, Whitesfield Road Nailsea, Bristol. Aged 76 years. Funeral took place 14th July 2018 at South Bristol Crem Bristol. I understand Ralph served in Egypt and Aden, but have no further details. After Military service, joined Avon and Somerset Police, rising to the rank of Sergeant.

MANDERSON

Former 14178004 Lance-Corporal Robert Manderson died earlier this month aged 91 years. Bob completed his National Service circa 1947 in Germany. He was a long serving member of the South Yorkshire Branch. The South Yorkshire Branch Chairman and Secretary attended Bob's funeral which was on 27 October 2017.

PHIPPS

Lieutenant-Colonel Denis Phipps MBE passed away after a short illness on the 7th October 2017 aged 89. He was first gazetted to the Royal Army Service Corps in 1948 and transferred to the Corps in 1959. A full Obituary by the Regimental secretary will appear in the Corps Journal.

-ooOoo-



Just to conclude this edition I thought I would end with a snippet from Barrie Morris who said, 'Thought your readers might like to see this unusual photograph. It shows a very smart Lance-Corporal in the Military Foot Police wearing the Broderick hat which was introduced in 1902 and replaced with a type of No.1 dress hat in 1905. He is wearing the Military Full Dress tunic and trousers of the Military Police Corps, he has the rank of Lance-Corporal and is wearing 5 good conduct chevrons on left cuff. His medals are The Queen's South Africa Medal with 3 bars and the King's South Africa Medal with bars South Africa 1901 and South Africa 1902. Wearing a brown leather belt with a General Service brass buckle. The Broderick hat was named after the Secretary for War, St John Broderick the 8th Viscount of Midleton. He was Secretary for War from 1900 to 1903. The hat resembled a No.1 dress hat without a peak. In the hat is an Edward VII cap badge (this was the first cap badge worn by the Military Police Corps). Behind the badge is a half moon coloured cloth, probably scarlet. The Broderick was retained by the Royal Marines till well into the 1930's.' *Ed: I am so pleased that I joined later. Now I think the NCO looks a little like Euan Grant, could Euan be older than we think?*

Compiled by Bob Eggelton.
02392265645
07913997233
joybob@btinternet.com
Skype: pompeybob65

